

February 20, 2024

Local Boundary Commission
550 West Seventh Avenue, Suite 1640
Anchorage, AK 99501

Dear Local Boundary Commission Staff:

I am writing in support of the petition for the incorporation of a Xunaa Borough. My wife and I are owners of property on Colt Island, which is included in the petition.

We maintain a home in the City and Borough of Juneau and contribute significantly to local services through property taxes, sales taxes, vehicle fees, harbor fees, launch permits, parking fees, and many others. The fact we are close in distance or utilize and pay for harbor services to access our remote property, does not create compatibility of the rural area comprised of Horse, Colt or northern Admiralty islands with the urban area of Juneau. In fact, we purchased our property to get out of and be disconnected with the urban area of Juneau. We clearly understood that we would receive no local services and appreciate that fellow property owners took the initiative to adopt and abide by local covenants.

The City of Hoonah has demonstrated in their petition how the proposed boundaries are interrelated, integrated and share common interests. This includes north Admiralty Island. It doesn't matter whether Horse or Colt exist on the east or west side of Admiralty, they share common interests with property owners in Funter Bay as well as those in Excursion Inlet, and even Port Frederick and should remain together if a proposed borough incorporation moves forward.

In our particular case, our cabin on Colt Island has been our base for hunting, fishing, and general camping/recreation to areas of Admiralty and Chichagof. We have been impressed with the City of Hoonah's management and enjoy our visits to the community. Their approach to keep these areas together and seek sales tax from commercial activities is very reasonable and I hope you will give it favorable consideration.

In my opinion, the objection from the City and Borough of Juneau should be discounted. They are obviously interested in some of these areas purely for tax revenue generation. They clearly do not intend to provide any services to these areas and as noted above, services being utilized within the current Juneau boundaries are already paid by users. Cabin owners are not a drain on services and a justification for additional taxation as communicated by Juneau officials. In addition, their deliberative process has been more politically influenced than focused on the best interest of the State or consistent state laws and regulations. This is evident in local planning discussions where they indicate their intent to annex Funter Bay, Horse, and Colt, but after lobbying, change their position to only want Horse and Colt. Drawing a boundary line between the very narrow distance between Colt and Admiralty makes no sense. Down the middle of Stephans Passage is the correct approach.

If the status quo was a long-term option, I am sure that would be our first choice. However, we understand that incorporating additional areas of the State will occur and that our best approach

is to align with the most reasonable proposal. Property owners such as us are much more aligned with Icy Strait area than urban Juneau. In addition to common interests, we really want the new Xunaa Borough to be successful and believe this will be more beneficial to a new Xunaa borough than Juneau. Finally, it appears much more consistent with the State Constitution for the LBC to approve this petition, which will fill the gaps and connect to other incorporated areas and not just leave a pocket of unincorporated area in the hopes that some additional action will be taken in the future.

Thank you for considering my comments.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Tibbles". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mike Tibbles
Lot 7, Area 3, Colt Island